

Mossflower Study Guide

Mossflower by Brian Jacques

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Mossflower Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Preface and Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 1-8.....	5
Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 9-18.....	8
Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 19-26.....	10
Part 2, Salamandastron: Chapters 27-31.....	12
Part 2, Salamandastron: Chapters 32-45.....	14
Part 3, Of Water and Warriors: Chapters 46-52.....	17
Characters.....	19
Objects/Places.....	22
Themes.....	24
Style.....	26
Quotes.....	28
Topics for Discussion.....	29



Plot Summary

Mossflower: A Story of Redwall is a prequel to Brian Jacques' bestseller Redwall. In this novel, Bella of Brockhall tells a young mouse the story of how Martin the Warrior saved Mossflower from the tyrannical rule of Tsarmina, Queen of a Thousand Eyes. Martin comes to Mossflower as the last of the woodland creatures are fleeing the rule of Tsarmina's father, Verdauga, only to have Tsarmina rise to the throne after Verdauga's death. The woodland creatures want to fight Tsarmina's rule, but they are not strong enough in number to defeat her army. However, Martin travels to Salamandastron to find Boar the Fighter and ask him to return to Mossflower and defeat Tsarmina. A great battle ensues upon Martin's return, freeing all of Mossflower. Mossflower is a riveting prequel that will satisfy many questions for fans of Redwall.

Martin the Warrior arrives in Mossflower just as the last family is fleeing the area in search of sanctuary among the woodland creatures. Martin is quickly arrested by Verdauga's army for carrying a weapon inside his territory. Martin is taken to the king where he is sentenced to the Kotir prison cells. That same night, Verdauga dies after being fed a poison arranged at the hand of his daughter, Tsarmina. Tsarmina blames the death on her brother, Gingivere, and has him imprisoned as well. Both Martin and Gingivere spend the winter in Kotir's prison.

During the spring, a thieving mouse is caught in the forest with food stolen from Kotir. The mouse, Gonff, is quickly arrested and placed in a cell with Martin. Gonff and Martin are both freed with help from the woodland creature resistance, the Corim. Soon after, Martin becomes a part of the resistance, helping the woodland creatures figure out a way to fight Tsarmina's rule and free Mossflower. To this end, Martin learns about the rightful ruler of Mossflower, Boar the Fighter. Martin agrees to make a quest to Salamandastron and bring Boar the Fighter back to help defeat Tsarmina.

As Martin, Gonff, and a young mole called Dinny, leave for their quest, the Corim learn about the arrest and imprisonment of two young hedgehogs. The Corim develop a plan to feed the poor captives while they work out a way to rescue them. A battle ensues between the woodland creatures and Tsarmina's troops, but the woodland creatures managed to escape mostly unharmed. A short time later, they enlist the help of an otter who has a knack for disguising himself as many different types of animals. This otter manages to get into Kotir disguised as a fox. Tsarmina believes his cover story and immediately makes him captain of her guard.

The otter manages to get both the young hedgehogs and Gingivere out of Kotir, but his secret is discovered as they flee and Tsarmina manages to get an arrow into him as he leaves. The otter dies, bringing about the wrath of his friends and family. The woodland creatures become more determined than ever to defeat Tsarmina. To this end, they draft a plan to flood the natural lake that once existed under Kotir. However, as they work on this plan, a fox and his band of mercenaries join Tsarmina and her army. This fox is a brilliant strategist who arranges an attack on the woodland creatures as they work on



their plan, killing several of them. In revenge, the woodland creatures attack Kotir at dawn, killing many of their men and destroying their doors and shutters.

Tsarmina no longer trusts the fox and so she arranges for him to die. Later, Tsarmina threatens the remaining mercenaries against fleeing. The woodland creatures begin to flood Kotir, but the plan does not work due to low water levels. The woodland creatures decide they must flee Mossflower. However, at that moment Martin returns with an army and a plan. Martin and his army lead an attack on Kotir, and at the same time dam the river to flood Kotir. Martin faces Tsarmina one on one and kills her. Mossflower is then free to build the great abbey known as Redwall.



Preface and Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 1-8

Preface and Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 1-8 Summary

Mossflower is the prequel to the novel, Redwall and second in the Redwall Series.

In the Preface, Bella of Brockhall welcomes a young mouse into her home to tell him a story of Martin the Warrior.

In Chapter 1, it is midwinter. Urthclaw, a mole, comes to the home of Ben Stickle and his wife Goody to warn them that soldiers are in the area once again collecting food as tithe for the ruler Verdauga. Goody hides the young children and stays out of the way as the soldiers search the house for food. When they are gone, Ben decides it is time to move his family out of the area to a safe place he has heard of in the woods. Before they go, however, the hedgehog and mole watch as the soldiers arrest a young mouse, a stranger to the area.

In Chapter 2, Gonff, a mouse thief, sneaks into the larders at Kotir and steals some food for the young hiding in the forest of Mossflower. At the same time, Martin the Warrior is taken to Verdauga's bedchamber. Verdauga is ill and the vixen, Fortunata, has come to treat him. Verdauga asks each of children what punishment Martin should suffer for carrying a weapon into his kingdom. Tsarina says he should be killed, but Gingivere says he should be set free. Verdauga elects to place Martin in cell for a short time. As he is taken away, Tsarina breaks his sword and orders that he be forced to wear the broken hilt around his neck.

In Chapter 3, Gonff takes food to the Stickle family and shares a meal with them.

In Chapter 4, Martin is placed in a cell and left. At the same time, Tsarina orders her brother to give Verdauga an herb drink Fortunata has prepared. As they leave, Tsarina verifies that Fortunata has created a poison to kill Verdauga as they previously discussed and Fortunata assures her she has. They next day, Martin overhears the chaos in the wake of Verdauga's death and Gingivere's imprisonment on the other side of the dungeon from Martin for the murder.

In Chapter 5, Gonff is caught in the forest in spring carrying food stolen from the Kotir larders. Gonff is placed in the same cell as Martin and assures Martin that when he escapes, he will take Martin with him. Gonff tells Martin all about Verdauga's conquering of the former leader of Mossflower and how he renamed the castle Kotir and ruled cruelly, but more fairly than Tsarina. Gonff also tells Martin about the growing rebellion among the woodland creatures that call themselves the Corim. Martin then tells Gonff how he came from the north where he was trained as a warrior by his father to fight sea rats.

In Chapter 6, in Mossflower, the Corim is discussing how they plan to rescue Gonff. At the same time, Argulor, a great eagle who has grown quite old, returns to Kotir where he



hopes to eventually kill a pine marten that lives there. A short time later, Gonff receives a note from the Corim with supplies to help he and Martin escape their cell.

In Chapter 7, a group of squirrel archers headed by Miss Amber and a group of otter led by Skipper head to Kotir to aid in Gonff's escape. At the same time, Gonff uses his skills to open the cell door. As Martin and Gonff attempt to navigate the confusing halls of Kotir, they accidentally run straight into Tsarina and her lieutenants, Ashleg and Fortunata. Martin takes control and leads the way through the barracks and out a window. Martin and Gonff fall into a tree. As Tsarina tries to get to the escaped prisoners, Argulor hears their cries and comes to menace them. A group of squirrels climb into the tree and help the escapees down to the ground and into the cover of the forest.

In Chapter 8, Bella of Brockhall welcomes the abbess of Loamhedge to her ancestral home along with her large group of refugees. They have escaped an illness that has devastated Loamhedge. Bella tells the Abbess Germaine about her father's decision to go on quest to Salamandstran, her husband's defeat by Verdauga, and her son's quest to avenge his father's death.

Preface and Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 1-8 Analysis

This novel begins in a future time of known length. The narrator, Bella of Brockhall, is telling this story to a young mouse about a time before the place where they currently live was peaceful and a nice place to live. Bella is a badger who has lived many years by this point, though the reader is unclear exactly how old Bella is.

The reader realizes immediately that the world of this novel is a world where animals speak to one another and live with human qualities and habits. This is a world not unlike the time of Arthur, but with animals rather than humans. Therefore, when the narrator tells the reader that the story is about how Martin the Warrior saved Mossflower, the reader comes to expect a story not unlike Arthur's heroic tale. They will not be disappointed.

The novel begins in a forest where there is a ruler who is cruel. This ruler steals food from his people in order to feed himself and his soldiers. This ruler is quickly murdered, however, leaving his even crueler daughter to rule in his place. This sets up a situation in which the woodland creatures will have to rise up and fight, or run away to avoid unfair persecution, poor work conditions, and starvation. The creatures clearly choose to fight, as witnessed when they go to Kotir to rescue one of their own from Tsarina's dungeon. The squirrels and otters are terrific fighters, but unfortunately there are more of Tsarina's soldiers than these fighters. It is clear that the will is there, but the numbers are not.

At the same time, the reader is told that Martin is a trained warrior from the north who has come to Mossflower after leaving his own village where rats overran the people.

Martin is trained to fight the kind of oppression Tsarina represents, therefore giving hope to the people of Mossflower that they may have a good leader in their midst.



Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 9-18

Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 9-18 Summary

In Chapter 9, as the otters, squirrels, Martin, and Gonff begin the walk to Mossflower, they become aware of Tsarina and her soldiers following them. A quick battle ensues, ending with the otters taking the mice underwater to escape to their camp, Camp Willow. Angry at the defeat, Tsarina orders one of her men to tell Fortunata to join them with a creature called the Gloomer.

In Chapter 10, at Camp Willow, Skipper learns about Tsarina's decision to bring the Gloomer on them. Back at the Stickles, young Ferdy and Coogs pretend to be warriors.

In Chapter 11, Fortunata is unhappy being awakened, and made ever more unhappy by the news she is to bring Tsarina the Gloomer. Two guards and the captain of the guard help Fortunata retrieve the creature from the lake where it is kept under Kotir. Fortunata then finds herself dragged into the woods following the frightening sea rat.

In Chapter 12, Skipper shows Martin the pike that he and his otters have captured and keep fed. Then they release it so it might face the Gloomer. The Gloomer and the pike put up a great fight each, but the pike is eventually victorious.

In Chapter 13, all the woodland creatures take up residence at Brockhall for safety, including Martin and Gonff. The Corim then discusses their next move. It is decided they need a spy. A robin, called Chibb, is chosen to be their spy.

In Chapter 14, the unhappy soldiers of Kotir are punished for their failure the day before. Tsarina then gives orders that the army be split into four and sent out into Mossflower to arrest any woodland creatures they can find.

In Chapter 15, the woodlander make a deal with Chibb. Chibb is to spy on Kotir for them and in exchange will be paid in sweet chestnuts. Tsarina goes to the cells to check them for readiness for the prisoners she hope will be arriving soon. While there, Tsarina speaks to her brother, attempting to be menacing, but he turns it back around and calls her a murderer. That night, the woodland creatures have a big feast while the young hedgehogs, Ferdy and Coggs, sneak away on their own warrior quest.

In Chapter 16, Fortunata and her soldiers unwittingly attack Ashleg and his forces, thinking they were woodlanders. Chibb finds a hole through which he can speak to Gingivere. Goody begins asking around about her missing hogs, Ferdy and Coggs. A search party is organized to find the youngsters. Cludd joins Fortunata and Ashleg's troops and shows that he has no reason to fear returning to Kotir because he has captured Ferdy and Coggs.

In Chapter 17, Bella begins to tell Martin about her father, Boar the Fighter. Martin suggests it might be in their best interest to find Boar and bring him back. For this



reason, Martin, Bella, and Gonff begin searching for the map Boar would have used to find Salamandastron. Tsarina tries to interrogate the young hedgehogs, but they refuse to tell her anything. Tsarina has them placed in the dungeon, in cells on either side of Gingivere.

In Chapter 18, Dinny the mole joins the search for the map to Salamandastron. They find a clue in a hidden desk drawer, then a crest over the fireplace. Using these clues, they finally find the map under a table in the kitchen.

Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 9-18 Analysis

Tsarina is angry that her prisoners have escaped, so she follows with some of her soldiers and picks a fight. It is clear that Tsarina works more by emotion than intelligence, thus it is not surprising when she leads her soldiers into an ambush they cannot win. However, Tsarina refuses to give up. Tsarina sends for a sea rat that her father has kept imprisoned under Kotir for many years called the Gloomer. This Gloomer is large and vicious, a formidable enemy against anyone, even Tsarina's own soldiers. Tsarina thinks this animal will win the fight for her against the otters, but again she miscalculates the otters' intelligence and strategy. The otters have a pike that is just as big and fierce as the Gloomer. However, they treat the pike well and it obeys its handlers.

Tsarina knows that the woodlanders are a problem that must be solved. To this end she decides to imprison them all. Again Tsarina underestimates her foe and ends up with just two baby hedgehogs. Tsarina is impulsive and cruel, therefore she does not realize how she has underestimated the woodlanders again. Tsarina thinks that if she imprisons these creatures, they will eventually tell her where the resistance is hiding. However, these creatures are strong, intelligent babies who want to be just like the warriors they have come to admire. Therefore, they refuse to rat out their friends, causing Tsarina to again become enraged and decide to imprison them.

As Tsarina continues to torture the woodlanders, Martin learns of the quest Bella's father went on years before. Martin believes that the woodlanders need a true leader and that Boar the Fighter is that leader. For this reason, Martin decides to go on quest to find Boar. This inserts both mystery and hope into the plot as Martin and his friends go about searching for the secret map to the place Boar went, Salamandastron.



Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 19-26

Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 19-26 Summary

In Chapter 19, Gingivere puts holes in the cell walls so that Ferdy and Coggs might visit with one another in his cell. At the same time, Martin and his friends have deciphered enough of the riddle to know where to begin their quest for Salamandastron.

In Chapter 20, as Martin, Dinny, and Gonff set out on their quest, the Corim travels to Kotir to put into action a plan to feed Ferdy and Coggs while they figure out a way to rescue them. Tsarina see the woodlanders taking up position around Kotir even before Cludd, her captain of the guard, can return and tell her. At the same time, Cludd sends three soldiers after Martin and his friends. Tsarina leads a group of soldiers out against the woodlanders and a battle ensues.

In Chapter 21, Martin and his friends continue on their quest, pole vaulting over a ditch near where the three soldiers continue to sleep. Throughout the battle, Chibb carries food to Gingivere's cell for the young hedgehogs while Ben guides the wounded into the underground den of the moles. At noon, Martin and his friends stop for lunch and spot the three soldiers behind them. When the soldiers begin to run, Martin and his friends do the same. At the same time, the battle ends and the woodlanders disappear, much to Tsarina's frustration. Later, Chibb tells the Corim that Gingivere wants to hide the hedgehogs in his cell to trick Tsarina into thinking they have been rescued.

In Chapter 22, Tsarina is angry when she learns the hedgehogs have escaped. Martin and his friends come across a pond even as the soldiers continue to follow them.

In Chapter 23, Skipper enlists the help of his brother, Mask. Mask has a talent of disguising himself as different woodland creatures, including those that populate Kotir. Tsarina visits Gingivere's cell to find out how the hedgehogs disappeared, but he pretends to be insane. Martin saves Dinny and Gonff from being killed by a swan's mate at the pond. One of the soldiers, however, is killed by the swan when he tries to steal the swan eggs. Tsarina asks Fortunata to do something for her.

In Chapter 24, Skipper introduces Mask to the Corim. Martin and his friends camp in the open after they mistakenly assume all three soldiers were killed by the swan. Fortunata goes into Mossflower in search of the woodlanders' hideout. Columbine recognizes Fortunata and warns the Corim. The Mask comes up with an idea to save the hedgehogs. Martin and his friends are attacked while they are sleeping by the remaining two soldiers. They lose most of their food, but then the soldiers turn on one another and fall into holes in the river.

In Chapter 25, Fortunata meets an old fox in the woods called Patchcoat. Fortunata convinces Patchcoat she is a healer fox called Besomtail. At the same time, Martin and



his friends follow the river for a long time before finally finding a place to cross. When they do, they are attacked by a snake and his newt friend.

In Chapter 26, Patchcoat takes Fortunata to Brockhall where she is accepted as a healer and fed at the expense of doing a large load of dishes. At the same time, Martin and his friends are rescued by Log-a-Log, a shrew who runs the ferry. Log-a-Log feeds the friends and learns of their quest. Log-a-Log offers to sail them to Salamandastron under the mountains in his new boat.

Part 1, Kotir: Chapters 19-26 Analysis

Gingivere, who has been very lonely and mistreated since his imprisonment, quickly befriends the young hedgehogs. As the Corim begins to plan a rescue, they learn of Gingivere and accept his help. Gingivere manages to convince his sister he has gone insane because of his imprisonment and to hide the hedgehogs in his cell to convince her they escaped. In doing this Tsarmina lowers her guard in regards to the hedgehogs, even as she increases her determination to squash the rebellion. Tsarmina sends her lieutenant, Fortunata, out into Mossflower to find the place where the woodlanders are hiding, a location that becomes more and more important as Tsarmina continues to battle these rebels.

As Tsarmina continues her war on the woodlanders, and the woodlanders search for a way to save the hedgehogs, Martin and his friends begin their quest. It does not have a good start as they are immediately followed by three soldiers. However, these soldiers are disobedient and starving, therefore they make a great many mistakes, leading to their deaths. Just as Martin and his friends seem free to continue their quest, they run into a snake and a newt who seem determined to cause them trouble. If not for Log-a-Log, this trio might have ended their quest before it really began. Now, however, they have a new mode of transportation, foreshadowing a quicker journey to Salamandastron.



Part 2, Salamandastron: Chapters 27-31

Part 2, Salamandastron: Chapters 27-31 Summary

In Chapter 27, Skipper convinces Fortunata that he has the stiffeners, giving her the excuse she wanted to slip into the woods with Ferdy and Coggs, who are not really Ferdy and Coggs but their siblings, Posy and Spike. Fortunata insists she needs herbs and leaves Brockhall with the two hedgehogs and her new companion, Patchcoat, who is really Mask. Mask convinces Fortunata that he has lost his way and they must separate at a fork in the path. Fortunata goes alone and is soon captured by woodlanders who kill her. At the same time, Martin and his friends pilot Log-a-Log's boat toward the mountain and are thrown over the edge of a waterfall. Tsarina watches from her window as an old fox rushes toward the walls of Kotir with the two hedgehogs, but is overcome by some woodlanders who steal the hedgehogs back. Tsarina welcomes the fox into her fortress and makes him captain of the guard.

In Chapter 28, Martin awakes in a strange, dark place, surrounded by bats. Martin is quickly reunited with Dinny and Log-a-Log, but Gonff cannot be found. At Kotir, Mask speaks with Gingivere, warning him to be ready for escape. Martin helps the bat leader, Lord Cayvear, search for Gonff with no success. However, he learns that the way out of the caves is guarded by an owl. At Kotir, Mask opens Gingivere's cell and walks him out as though he is taking him to Tsarina, the hedgehogs hidden under his cape. Cludd, angry at losing his job, stomps on Mask's tail and is shocked when it comes off. Cludd sounds the alarm. At the same time, Dinny comes up with a plan to get rid of the owl blocking their way out.

In Chapter 29, Mask and his escapees run. Tsarina arrives and fires an arrow at her brother, but it hits Mask instead. Mask and his escapees make it out of Kotir, but it soon becomes clear that Mask is badly injured. Mask dies in Skipper's arms.

In Chapter 30, Log-a-Log creates a gate over the hole Dinny created so that the bats might protect this area from ever being overrun by an owl again. Martin and the others continue their journey, saddened at Gonff's absence. Unfortunately, they are barely gone a few hours when they are captured by toads. They are taken to the toad leader and placed in the Screamhole. Tsarina and her army track the woodlanders as the woodlanders lay Mask to rest. As Tsarina's soldiers come across the woodlanders, Skipper challenges Cludd to a fight. Skipper wins and the woodlanders move to leave. Bella warns Tsarina to leave them alone or face the consequences.

In Chapter 31, after falling into the Screamhole, Martin, Log-a-Log, and Dinny are thrilled to find Gonff alive and well in the same hole. They meet the eel that lives in the hole and make a deal with it. Martin promises to get the eel out of the hole if it promises not to eat them. Dinny digs his way to the surface and uses a net to help get his pals out. However, the snake and newt have gone off to warn the toads. Martin and the



others escape, forcing the toad leader to lead them out of the area as the eel eats his minions.

While Tsarina and her soldiers are gone from Kotir, the Abbess takes a group of woodlanders to search the stronghold. They are surprised to discover a secret entrance under the dungeon. Upon returning, Tsarina takes out her anger on the soldiers and Ashleg. Later, Tsarina sees mouse tracks on the floor of her room and has Ashleg search for evidence of the woodland creatures. Ashleg, grown convinced of Tsarina's insanity, runs away.

Part 2, Salamandastron: Chapters 27-31 Analysis

Fortunata is killed for her loyalty to Tsarina, showing the reader that although a mostly peaceful bunch, the woodlanders are not above cruelty when necessary. At the same time, this allows Mask to get into Kotir by tricking Tsarina into thinking that Fortunata sent him to return the hedgehogs. Tsarina is so disillusioned with her own soldiers, and their leaders, that she immediately gives Mask the role of Captain of the Guard, replacing Cludd. This gives Mask the role he needs to get to Gingivere and release both he and the hedgehogs. At the same time Mask is close to Tsarina, but he does not take the risk of killing her for fear of what it would mean for the hedgehogs. Instead, Mask gives his own life in helping them escape. This is a sad turn in the novel, showing again Tsarina's cruelty, as well as her skills are archery. Although she appears to be going insane, Tsarina remains a strong adversary to the woodlanders.

As the woodlanders continue to fight Tsarina and return to them their young hedgehogs, Martin finds himself and his friends running into one problem after another. The attempt to take a boat under the mountain failed when there proved to be an underground waterfall in their way. They are saved from some goodhearted bats, whom they aid in return, but have lost Gonff. Then they are quickly captured by toads. This is a dark situation, fueled by the return of the snake and the newt, as they end up in a pit with an eel. However, Gonff is there and he has already befriended the eel. Martin manages to use his intelligence to get them out of this situation and they escape, allowing them to continue their quest. However, the reader must wonder what lies ahead of these hapless travelers.



Part 2, Salamandastron: Chapters 32-45

Part 2, Salamandastron: Chapters 32-45 Summary

In Chapter 32, the Corim gather to celebrate the return of the hedgehogs and to welcome Gingivere to their fold. At the same time, they discuss what they might do next. An idea is brought up about the secret entrance into Kotir. They have discovered through this entrance that the fortress is built in what was once a lake, but it went dry when River Moss changed direction. They propose digging tunnels to reflood this lake, thus bringing Kotir down. At the same time, Martin and his friends find themselves walking in sand dunes that are far from anything they have ever known before. They soon find themselves at the ocean, walking on the beach. They are attacked by sea birds and run to a clump of rocks for protection. There they find a rock pond where they search for food. While fishing in this pond, Gonff hooks a crab. The crab's father comes out of the water and chases them.

In Chapter 33, Martin and his friends quickly run from the crab, eventually falling to the beach. They continue their journey until they come across a sea rat who lies dead on the sand. They bury the rat and enjoy the comforts of his shack for the night. In Mossflower, the woodlanders began working on their flood plan while Tsarina has something of a mental break in the woods. Tsarina kills one of her own soldiers thinking he is Gingivere.

In Chapter 34, Martin and his friends continue their journey, so close to Salamandastron that they can see it. When they stop for the night, they are joined by three hares. These hares tell the trio that they must go with them to the mountain. The hares take Martin and his friends to an entrance at the bottom of the mountain and lead them to the heart of Salamandastron. At the same time, Bane, a mercenary fox with a group of sixty, meets Tsarina in the woods and decide to join her fight with the promise that Bane will be made co-leader of Kotir when it is done.

In Chapter 35, Martin and his friends are introduced to Boar the Fighter, who does not seem surprised to see them in his mountain. Boar shows Martin and his friends to his chambers and promises to explain things to them in the morning.

In Chapter 36, Bane and Tsarina lead a raid on the woodlanders the next morning, catching them at the sight of their flood tunnels. Several woodlanders are killed, angering both Lady Amber and Skipper. The Corim decide, however, not to retaliate.

In Chapter 37, after a nice breakfast, Boar takes Martin to see a special chamber in the mountain called the echo room. There Boar shows Martin his father's throne and writing on the wall that seems to predict the future. Boar shows Martin his own arrival at Salamandastron on the wall. However, there is more that Boar refuses to tell Martin. Later, Boar gives Martin a sword he has made out of special metal to replace the sword Tsarina broke.



In Chapter 38, Bane leads another early morning attack on the woodlanders, but is surprised when the woodlanders are waiting for them inside their own parade grounds. The woodlanders send arrows through every open door and window, even sending arrows into Tsarina's rooms. Tsarina finally orders the doors and windows closed. The woodlanders remain until noon time, then Lady Amber and her squirrels shoot flaming arrows at all the doors and windows, setting the wood aflame. This includes the tapestries in Tsarina's room.

In Chapter 39, Boar gives Martin lessons on using his new sword. Then, during another tour of the caves, Boar sees his enemy's ship, Bloodwake, just off shore. Boar challenges the rats to a fight and Martin and his friends insist on helping.

In Chapter 40, Bane and his soldiers wait in the woods for the woodlanders to return, but they do not. In fact, Germaine scolds Amber and Skipper for going against the decision of the Corim. At the same time, Bella finds a new refuge for the woodlanders at the farm Gingivere now runs with his mate, Sandingomm.

In Chapter 41, Boar, Martin, and the others lead a charge against the sea rats. There are too many. Boar creates a distraction so that Martin and the others can commandeer the rat ship. At Kotir, Tsarina decides she can no longer trust Bane and dresses him up like Ashleg.

In Chapter 42, Martin and his friends free the slave rowers on the ship and begin to plan their next move. They are happy to learn they can sail directly to Mossflower and do so.

In Chapter 43, Argulor, mistaking Bane for Ashleg, picks him up and flies high into the sky. Bane fights and soon he and Argulor are both dead. Tsarina then sends her new captain of the guard, Brogg, to bury Bane and Argulor, and to kill Ratflank for insubordination. The moles finish digging their tunnels and begin the flooding of Kotir.

In Chapter 44, as the newly christened ship, Wuddshipp, heads up River Moss, they stop at Log-a-Log's village and pick up many more willing soldiers. Tsarina threatens Bane's mercenaries should they decide to leave. The woodlanders discover the water level of the river is too low to flood Kotir. They discuss whether or not to flee Mossflower to await a time when the flooding is possible.

In Chapter 45, Tsarina begins to go crazy in the belief that she can hear water trickling below Kotir. The woodlanders make one last trek to the river to see if they can increase the flow of water below Kotir. Chibb announces an approaching ship. The woodlanders are thrilled to find Martin and his friends have returned with a small army, but Bella is unhappy to learn about her father's death. Martin learns of the situation with Kotir and promises a plan of attack.

Part 2, Salamandastron: Chapters 32-45 Analysis

The Corim comes up with a peaceful plan of attack against Kotir, flooding the lake under the fortress so that it might fall. This is a delightful plan for the Corim because they are



naturally peaceful creatures who do not wish to kill or have killed any more creatures. Not only this, but they have come to the conclusion that something has befallen Martin and his friends and that help is not on its way. However, as they begin work on this plan, they are attacked unprovoked by Tsarina and her new co-leader, Bane. This causes a great deal of hurt feelings on the side of the woodlanders, especially with the combative Lady Amber and Skipper. They come up with a brilliant plan of revenge, attacking the attackers before they can get out of the fortress. This is against the decision of the Corim, but because it is highly successful it goes unpunished.

At the same time, Martin and his friends continue to battle their way to Salamandastron. After several close calls, they discover that Salamandastron is not a mountain filled with fire breathing dragons, but a mountain that hides a huge forge where a badger creates beautiful weapons. Martin is pleased to have found Boar the Fighter and confident that their quest has come to its desired ending. However, it turns out Boar has enemies of his own and that it is already written that Martin will be the hero of Mossflower. Boar dies in his fight with his enemy, something he has seen coming and gone to without fear, allowing Martin and his friends to escape to return to Mossflower with a growing army of trained fighters.

The Corim's plan to flood Kotir appears to be failing and they feel their only choice is to leave their home and hide until the river rises and is able to flood the fortress. This plan is unsatisfying, but it appears to be the only plan open to the woodlanders. They are still outnumbered by Tsarina's army, despite the fact that they are now starving and becoming more and more disillusioned by Tsarina's insanity and cruelty. It seems that now would be a good time to attack Kotir, but the woodlanders would remain outnumbered, despite being smarter and well organized, leaving them with only a fifty-fifty chance of winning. For this reason, Martin's return will be a plus at this point. In fact, when he does arrive, with a hundred shrews and other animals willing to fight, the Corim quickly changes its plans.



Part 3, Of Water and Warriors: Chapters 46-52

Part 3, Of Water and Warriors: Chapters 46-52 Summary

In Chapter 46, Tsarina sets her soldiers out to set traps for the woodlanders in Mossflower, unaware of the impending attack. When the woodlanders arrive in Kotir's parade grounds, Tsarina is outraged. Martin tells Tsarina she has until sundown to leave or she will be killed. Tsarina immediately sets about setting her archers on the ground outside the fortress. The squirrels outsmart Tsarina, killing half her archers from the trees above them. Moments later, Tsarina sends out soldiers to attack the woodlanders. A short battle ensues, ending in something of a tie.

In Chapter 47, late that evening, Martin speaks to Tsarina again. Tsarina not only refuses to leave, but she fires an arrow into Martin's leg, wounding him. Tsarina promises her soldiers double rations if they will remain and fight. Later, Martin orders the sinking of the Wuddshipp to dam the river and increase the flow of water under Kotir. The next morning, Tsarina and her soldiers wake to discover the lower floors of the fortress. Tsarina rushes to the roof with some of the soldiers. In a moment they find themselves under attack by a ballista. The tower of Kotir quickly begins to collapse.

In Chapter 48, Tsarina becomes convinced that her brother is behind the attack. Germaine designs a new abbey while hiding at Gingivere's farm with the children. The Kotir soldiers begin to abandon Kotir and surrender to the woodlanders. Brogg helps Tsarina onto a table for her escape, but she refuses to allow him to escape with her. Martin follows Tsarina to the far side of the fortress and engages her in battle. When both are badly injured, Tsarina's own paranoia causes her to wade too far out into the lake and drown. Bella informs the prisoners they will not be killed, but allowed to leave Mossflower. A short time later, Bella and Martin's friends go in search of him and find him barely alive. Bella sends word to Germaine and runs herself to retrieve the abbess.

In Chapter 49, Bella arrives at Gingivere's farm and races to get Germaine to Martin while Gingivere and the others follow. Germaine declares that Martin will survive after a long convalescence. The prisoners are marched away from Mossflower.

In Chapter 50, Martin wakes to learn that Gonff and Columbine have married and the abbess plans to build a large abbey where they can all live happily together.

In Chapter 51, the mouse's father, Gonff son of Gonff and Columbine, comes to Brockhall to retrieve his child.

In Chapter 52, Sunflash, son of Bella, arrives at Salamandastron to fulfill his part in the prophecy.



Part 3, Of Water and Warriors: Chapters 46-52 Analysis

Martin leads the woodlanders against Tsarina and her soldiers. The soldiers are starving and most of them are ready to quit until Tsarina offers them double rations. However, before the soldiers can give their lives in battle, Kotir is flooded. The soldiers quickly surrender to the woodlanders and no one is killed. Only Tsarina dies when she and Martin battle in an epic battle that has been foreshadowed throughout the novel. Tsarina, who has a terrible fear of water, drowns in her attempts to avoid Martin's sword. Martin is badly injured, but he survives and becomes a citizen of Mossflower.

At the end of the novel, the author pulls together the story, showing the reader that the young mouse who has come to listen to her story is the grandson of Gonff the thief, who is such good friends with Martin and partially responsible for making Martin part of this story. The author then tells the reader who came to take Boar the Fighter's place on Salamandastron. It is no surprise that it is Bella's son who comes to that place as he is Boar the Fighter's grandson and lone male heir. This will more than likely play a role in a future novel, just as Martin's story and his sword have and will play a role in other novels of the series.



Characters

Martin the Warrior

Martin, the Warrior, is a mouse who has left his home village after the disappearance of his father to wander around aimlessly. Martin finds himself in Mossflower where he is promptly arrested by Verbauga's soldiers. Tsarina, Verbauga's daughter, wants to kill Martin for coming armed onto their lands without permission, but Verbauga elects to only imprison the mouse. For this reason, Tsarina breaks his father's sword, making a sworn enemy of Martin from their first meeting.

Martin is placed in a cell and left there throughout the winter until Gonff is arrested and placed in his cell. Martin and Gonff escape together and Martin pledges his help to the woodlanders who are rebelling against Tsarina's rule. When Martin hears about Boar the Fighter, the rightful leader of Mossflower, he agrees to go on a quest to bring Boar the Fighter back to Mossflower. Despite many mishaps, Martin makes it to Salamandastron, where Boar is thought to be, but is unable to bring Boar back with him.

Martin arrives in Mossflower just in time to raise his army against Tsarina. Martin then faces Tsarina alone and defeats her in a battle that leaves him badly injured. However, Martin recovers and lives the rest of his life in Mossflower.

Bella of Brockhall

Bella of Brockhall is telling this story to the grandson of Gonff the Thief. Bella is a big part of the story, playing a big role in the Corim. Bella is something of a leader to the woodlanders because it is her family that was once the rulers of Mossflower. In this role, Bella guides Martin toward his quest to Salamandastron, gives the woodlanders a safe place to hide, and finds a new place for them to go should they need a second hideout. Bella also plays a major role in saving Martin's life at the end of the novel.

Gonff the Thief

Gonff the Thief is a mouse who makes his living stealing. Gonff steals food from Kotir for the people of Mossflower. When Gonff is caught stealing, he is imprisoned in the same cell as Martin, befriending him and becoming the reason why Martin joins the Corim. When Martin decides to go on quest to Salamandastron, Gonff chooses to go with him. Gonff separates from Martin and the others when their boat falls over a waterfall, but is found again in the Screamhole with the eel. Gonff rejoins his friends and fights at Martin's side, both against the sea rats and later against Tsarina's soldiers.



Dinny the Mole

Dinny the Mole is a young mole who joins the search for the map that led Boar the Fighter to Salamandastron. Dinny helps the figure out the odd clues and later joins the quest. Dinny proves to be a brave, strong companion who helps Martin and the others survive their quest and return to free Mossflower.

Log-a-Log

Log-a-Log is a shrew Martin and his friends meet on their quest to Salamandastron. Log-a-Log is a seaman who was once a captive on the sea rat ship. Log-a-Log joins the quest so that he might try out the ship he has recently completed. Log-a-Log is essential in getting an army up to help fight Tsarmina and her soldiers.

Ferdy and Coggs

Ferdy and Coggs are two baby hedgehogs who belong to Ben and Goody Stickle. Ferdy and Coggs admire Martin and want to be warriors like Martin. To this end, Coggs and Ferdy slip out of Brockhall to pretend to be warriors and are captured by Cludd. This causes the woodlanders to have to spend a great deal of time trying to find a way to rescue the youngsters. When they do, they also save Gingivere, Tsarmina's brother.

Tsarmina, Queen of the Thousand Eyes

Tsarmina is the daughter of Verdauga. When Verdauga dies, by poison that Tsarmina has arranged for him to be given, Tsarmina accuses her brother of murder and takes over her father's throne. Tsarmina is a cruel leader who treats her soldiers almost as bad as the woodlanders who are rising against her. Tsarmina is smart, however, and she manages to keep the woodlanders at bay for most of the winter and summer. In the end, Tsarmina begins to go insane as she becomes convinced that her brother is out to get her and that she will drown, which she does, in fact, do.

Gingivere

Gingivere is the only son of Verdauga and the brother of Tsarmina. Tsarmina accuses Gingivere, unopposed, of murdering their father. This leads to Gingivere's imprisonment and Tsarmina's rise to the throne. Gingivere later escapes with the young hedgehogs and leaves Mossflower to make a life for himself far from his sister. Gingivere becomes a farmer and finds a mate. Later, Gingivere provides a sanctuary for his Mossflower friends.



Fortunata

Fortunata is a healer fox. Fortunata uses her herbs to poison and kill Verdauga so that Tsarmina might rise to the throne. Fortunata then becomes Tsarmina's closest advisor, always trying to keep Tsarmina happy even as the woodlanders make one successful attack after another. Eventually Tsarmina sends Fortunata into Mossflower to find the woodlander's hideout. Fortunata is found out by the woodlanders and killed.

Ashleg

Ashleg is a pine marten with a wooden leg who is a servant/advisor to Tsarmina. Ashleg is the last of Tsarmina's loyal servants who remains loyal to her. However, when Tsarmina goes insane, Ashleg runs away. Throughout the novel, Ashleg is pursued by an eagle who has never tasted pine marten. Unfortunately the eagle never eats Ashleg, but is tricked by Ashleg's cloak into attacking the fox, Bane.

Chibb

Chibb is a greedy little robin who is hired by the woodlanders to spy on Kotir in exchange for payment of sweet chestnuts. Chibb is not trustworthy and the woodlanders wonder how helpful he will be. However, it turns out that Chibb is priceless to the woodlander's cause.

Bane

Bane is a fox who is a mercenary. Bane wants to find a place he can rule ruthlessly and thinks he has found the perfect place when he comes across Kotir. Bane strikes a deal with Tsarmina to become co-leader of Kotir if he will help her win against the woodlanders. The addition of Bane leads to some trouble for the woodlanders, until Tsarmina becomes unhappy with him and tricks an eagle into attacking him.

Boar the Fighter

Boar the Fighter is Bella's father. Boar was the ruler of Mossflower before he decided to go on a quest to find Salamandastron, the same place his father quested to before him. Boar left behind his daughter's husband to rule and it was the son-in-law who was killed by Verbauga. When Martin goes in search of Boar, he finds him living happily under Salamandastron. However, Boar is killed in a battle against sea rats before he can return to Mossflower and help oust Tsarmina.



Objects/Places

Martin's Sword

Boar, the Fighter, forges a new sword for Martin to replace the one Tsarina broke.

Bane's Sword

Bane has a curved sword. After Bane's death, Brogg takes over his sword. However, he never really has a chance to use it.

Map to Salamandastron

Bella, Martin, Gonff, and Dinny find the map to Salamandastron under the kitchen table that was built by Boar the Fighter's father.

Ashleg's Cloak

Ashleg wears a velvet cloak covered in feathers. When Ashleg disappears and Tsarina begins to distrust Bane, she dresses him in Ashleg's cloak so that the eagle will attack him.

Bows and Arrows

The squirrels of Mossflower fight with bows and arrows.

Javelins and Spears

The otters of Mossflower fight with javelins and spears.

Stone Dragon Head

There is a stone dragon head on Salamandastron that Boar sometimes places in the window and puts fire in the mouth to convince sea rats and other would-be invaders that there are dragons in the mountain.

Corim

Corim is the name of the rebellion. It stands for Council of Resistance in Mossflower.



Wuddshipp

Wuddshipp is the new name Martin and his friends give to the sea rat ship they take from the sea rats who attack Salamadastron.

Brockhall

Brockhall is the ancestral home of Bella of Brockhall and her father before her, Boar the Fighter.

Kotir

Kotir is the fortress where Verbauga and Tsarmina rule. Kotir is destroyed at the end of the novel when the woodlanders flood the fortress and bombard the building with stones.

Mossflower

Mossflower is the lands in and around Kotir where the woodlanders live.

Salamadastron

Salamadastron is a mountain out of which it is said that fire can be seen. Many think the fire is caused by a fire breathing dragon, but the mountain's fire come from a forge. It is here that Martin and his friends find Boar the Fighter.



Themes

Oppression

The majority of the novel deals with the rule of Verbauga and his daughter, Tsarmina. Verbauga is a tyrant who comes to Mossflower and kills the ruler so that he may take control of the area. Verbauga rules for many years, fighting back other invaders and caring for the people of Mossflower. Verbauga can be cruel, but his cruelty has a purpose. However, when Verbauga's daughter takes control of Mossflower, she rules with open cruelty that has little purpose but to further her own interests.

The woodlanders are a gentle people who only want to be left alone to live their lives. However, when Verbauga begins taking what little food and supplies they have for his own launders, they begin to leave the area and ban together. When Tsarmina takes control, the woodlanders battle against her in many small skirmishes to protect their own. Tsarmina becomes enraged against the woodlanders and begins seeking them out, planning to imprison them so that they might use them to do the work in the fields around Kotir and provide food for her and her army.

Oppression is an important theme of the novel because if not for Tsarmina's cruelty there would be little motive for the woodlanders to rise up against her. The entire plot of the novel involves the fight of the woodlanders against Tsarmina, ending in Tsarmina's death and the victory of the woodlanders. It is this reason that oppression is a theme of the novel.

Friendship

Martin develops a close friendship with Gonff from the beginning of the novel. In fact, without his friendship with Gonff Martin might not have become involved in the Corim. Later, when they go on quest together, Martin and Gonff save one another's lives over and over again. Dinny the Mole is also part of the quest. Over time, Dinny proves himself to be very important to the trio as well. They each help the others out of danger time and time again.

Skipper is good friends with Lady Amber. The two of them are one of kind, both leaders of a group of warriors. These two fight side by side, over and over, until the battles are over. Skipper also has a wonderful relationship with Mask, an otter who is both is brother and friend. When Mask is killed by Tsarmina, it leads to a great deal of anger and resentment on Skipper's part. This leads to Skippers fight with Chudd and Chudd's death.

Friendship is an important theme in this novel because the friendship between Martin and his friends, as well as the friendships between many of the other woodland creatures creates many situations in which each of the creatures is inspired to help the others.

Heroes

There are many heroes in this novel. Martin is the most obvious, a mouse who went on quest to find the man they think will lead them to success and then killing Tsarina single handedly. However, there are many other heroes too. Bella proves herself to be heroic when she races to bring Germaine to Martin to help heal his wounds. Skipper and Lady Amber prove themselves heroic over and over when they fight against Tsarina's soldiers even though they are often outnumbered.

Heroes is a theme of the novel because without the heroic actions of many of the characters of this novel, the success of the woodlanders would never have taken place. The woodlanders are very brave, very strong in their fight, managing to outwit and win battles against Tsarina and her soldiers over and over again despite their lack of training and their smaller numbers. For this reason, heroes is an important theme of the novel.



Style

Point of View

The novel is recounted in the third-person omniscient point of view. The author uses Tsarina, Martin, Bella, Gonff, and many other characters as narrators in this novel. The author uses each character to tell their part of the story, telling the reader things they need to know to comprehend the overall plot even though some events might not be known by other important characters. The author also inserts the authorial voice in his narration by suggesting to the reader that Bella is telling the story to a young mouse.

The point of view of this novel works well with the plot of the novel because it creates a well-rounded story in which the reader is aware of many things that are going on that impact the plot of the novel without restricting the point of view to only one or two characters or one side of the conflict that propels the plot. The authorial voice also allows the reader to learn some things about the plot that might not be known to the reader any other way. Hence, the point of view works well with the plot.

Setting

The novel is set in Mossflower. Mossflower is a fictional, rural area that brings to mind the settings of Arthurian type stories. The woodlanders live in the forest, many of them in small homes until they are forced out by the cruelty of Verbauga. The woodlanders then move into Brockhall, the ancestral home of Bella of Brockhall. Kotir is the fortress where Tsarina lives and from where she rules Mossflower.

The setting of the novel is an ancient, knights of the round table type of setting. The characters, while all animals, wield swords and bows and arrows to fight the oppression of their ruler, Tsarina. The setting is romantic and dangerous, a setting that compliments the conflict that propels the plot of the novel. It is this reason that the setting of the novel works well with the plot.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is mostly simple English. The author uses a simple English to appeal to the younger readers who are his primary audience. However, the author also uses a unique type of grammar to create a unique language for various of his characters, especially the moles. The author also uses language to create some interesting names of his characters and settings.

The language of this novel works well with the plot because the author uses it to support his unique world. The author uses language to not only create a world filled with human-like animals, but he uses it to create unique language for these creatures who populate his novel. The author does not use a great deal of language that might be confusing as

most of his made up language is made of words that are easily identifiable to even young readers.

Structure

The novel is divided into three parts. Each part is given a name that describes something important to the themes that take place in that part. The novel includes fifty-two chapters, varying in length from exceedingly short to very long. The novel is written in both narration and dialogue, including a great deal of inner monologue and description.

The novel has one main plot and several subplots. The main plot follows the woodlanders as they struggle to find a way to rid their land of the oppressive rule of Tsarina. A subplot follows Martin as he searches for Boar the Fighter. Another subplot follows the story of Gingivere. Another subplot follows Bella's struggle to lead her people and find a safe place for them to hide. All the plots come to a satisfying conclusion at the end of the novel.



Quotes

"This was how Martin the Warrior first came to Kotir, place of the wildcats" (Chapter 1, p. 14).

"Shutting his ears against the sounds of the revelers, Martin lay upon the straw with the sword handle pressing against his chest. Now that his last hopes were gone, it looked like being a long hard winter" (Chapter 4, p. 34).

"The Gloomer must be brought here quickly to consolidate her triumph" (Chapter 9, p. 73).

"Huh, the cat and her soldiers can march about all season, but there's no one left to order about and they ain't no farmers, that's sure. They'll starve without others to do their labor" (Chapter 13, p. 96).

"Ferdie and Coggs were well and truly captured" (Chapter 16, p. 120).

"The Corim plan was beautifully simple" (Chapter 20, p. 149).

"Tsarina climbed the stairs pensively. This strange fox was certainly a lucky find" (Chapter 27, p. 221).

"Thus passed the Mask, the strange one who lived alone in Mossflower, the otter who was master of many disguises" (Chapter 30, p. 239).

"The murderous claws shot out, burying themselves into the pine marten's shoulder through the feathered cape he wore" (Chapter 31, p. 260).

"The very sight of a homely oatcake brought a lump to his throat at the thought of the good friends he had left behind, especially of little Ferdie and Coggs" (Chapter 32, p. 279).

"Martin waited for sunset, whilst Tsarina berated her soldiers as she tried to think up fresh schemes for victory" (Chapter 46, p. 391).

"They bowed to the badger. 'Welcome to your mountain, Sunflash the Mace, Lord of Salamandastron'" (Chapter 52, p. 431).



Topics for Discussion

Who is Martin the Warrior? Why do they call him warrior? How does Martin happen to come to Mossflower? Why does Martin join the Corim? Why does Martin decide to take a quest to Salamandastron? Why would Martin want to do such a thing? What happened to Martin's sword? Why does Martin wear the broken hilt around his neck? What eventually happens to the sword?

Who is Gonff the thief? Why does he steal? Is this immoral? Why does Gonff befriend Martin? Why does Gonff go on quest with Martin? What is Gonff's role in this quest? Who does Gonff fall in love with? How does this relationship change his life at the end of the novel? What impact does the friendship with Martin have on Gonff? How does the events of the novel change the lives of these friends in the long run?

Why does Bella tell this story to the young mouse? What is important about this story? What role does Martin play in Bella's story? What role does Bella play herself in the story? Who does the young mouse turn out to be? Did Bella know this to begin with? Is this why Bella tells this mouse her story?

What is the Corim? What do they want? How do they go about this? Who is in charge of this group? Who makes most of the decisions? Is the point of the Corim to wage war? What happens when the Corim learns two hedgehogs have been arrested? What do they do? What reason does the Corim prefer the idea of flooding Kotir rather than force a battle? What is their intended outcome? Do they get this outcome?

Who is Skipper? What group does he lead? What kind of leader is Skipper? How do Skipper and his group fight? Who is Mask? What role does he play in Skipper's life? Why does Skipper turn to Mask when the Corim needs help? What role does Mask play in the rescuing of the baby hedgehogs? How does Mask's death impact Skipper? Why does Skipper encourage Lady Amber to go against Corim orders to attack Kotir after Bane attacks them at the construction of the tunnels?

Who is Boar the Fighter? Why has he left Mossflower? Why do Martin and his friends go in search of Boar? What do they find? How did Boar know they would come? How does Boar respond to their arrival? Why does Boar refuse to tell Martin what has been prophesized for him? How does Boar die? How does this impact the Corim? Bella?

Who are Ferdy and Coggs? What do they want to be? Why? How do they end up being arrested by Tsarina's soldiers? Why does the Corim struggle to find a way to rescue the hedgehogs? Who do they befriend while in their cell? What benefit does this friendship prove to make for the Corim? How are they rescued? What do they decide they would rather be when they grow up? Why?